

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
ACDA-07 IGA-02 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 MC-02
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P 301658Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2337
INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
USCINCSO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 6033

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, CO
SUBJ: MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO COLOMBIA

1. DURING JOINT CALL ON DEFENSE MINISTER BY OUTGOING AND INCOMING MILITARY GROUP COMMANDERS, U.S. OFFICERS WERE MYSTIFIED BY MINISTER'S EXPRESSIONS OF GRATIFICATION OVER APPROVAL OF AN EIGHT MILLION DOLLAR INCREASE IN FMS CREDIT, TO BE DEVOTED TO PURCHASE OF RADIO PATROL CARS, INDIVIDUAL POLICE WEAPONS, AND RIOT CONTROL EQUIPMENT FOR THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE, A DEPENDENCY OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. DURING ANOTHER SIMILAR CALL, ACTING COLOMBIAN ARMY COMMANDER EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION OVER NEWS FROM COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR TO U.S. BARCO THAT 50,000 M-14 RIFLES WERE NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE TO COLOMBIA. EMBASSY THEN RECEIVED A FONOFF NOTE OF 22 JUNE EXPRESSING GOC'S INTEREST IN ACQUIRING 50,000 M-14 RIFLES.

2. POST HAS NO INFORMATION CONCERNING ANY INCREASE IN FMS CREDIT FOR POLICE PURCHASES. COLOMBIAN ARMY HAD ON 20 MAY REQUESTED TO PURCHASE 50,000 M-14 RIFLES AVAILABLE UNDER ARMY MIMEX OFFER 1710, BUT WERE ADVISED IN EARLY JUNE THAT THE RIFLES HAD BEEN ALLOCATED TO ANOTHER COUNTRY. US ARMY INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS COMMAND MESSAGE
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032010Z JUN 77 WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO STATE THAT
"YOUR REQUIREMENT WILL BE GIVEN CONSIDERATION ON ADDITIONAL EXCESSES THAT MAY MATERIALIZE IN THE NEAR FUTURE."

3. WE HAVE NOW LEARNED FROM A USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE IN THE DEFENSE MINISTRY THAT THE INFORMATION CONCERNING BOTH THE RIFLES AND THE ALLEGED EIGHT MILLION DOLLAR ADDITIONAL FMS

CREDIT FOR POLICE PURCHASES STEMS FROM A TELEPHONE CALL FROM AMBASSADOR BARCO TO THE DEFENSE MINISTER. FONOFF NOTE STEMS FROM CONSEQUENT PERSONAL REQUEST BY DEFENSE MINISTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER.

4. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY AND MILGP HAVE NO MORE INFORMATION CONCERNING EITHER MATTER, THE STORY ON THE RIFLES SOUNDS POSSIBLE. WE DOUBT THE STORY ON POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL FMS CREDIT FOR POLICE, AND SUSPECT THAT AMBASSADOR BARCO HAS BEEN MISINFORMED OR HAS MISUNDERSTOOD. PLEASE ADVISE SOONEST ANY INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON EITHER SUBJECT SO WE CAN DISABUSE DEFENSE MINISTER OF ANY MISCONCEPTIONS. SUGGEST AMBASSADOR BARCO ALSO BE ADVISED OF FACTS, AND THAT HE TOO BE URGED TO RECTIFY AND INCORRECT ADVICE PREVIOUSLY GIVEN TO DEFENSE MINISTER.
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Message Attributes

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